

REMARKS

Applicants thank the Examiner for the thorough consideration given the present application.

Claims 1-25 are now present in this application. Claims 1, 8 and 10 are independent.

Claims 8 and 10 have been amended and claim 25 has been added. Reconsideration of this application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1, 2 and 9 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ruckl in view of Beyer et al. or Klein. Further, claims 3-6 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ruckl in view of Beyer et al. or Klein and further in view of Urlichs, and claim 7 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ruckl in view of Beyer et al. or Klein and further in view of Rinaldi. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Complete discussions of the Examiner's rejections are set forth in the Office Action, and are not being repeated here.

The Examiner rejects claim 1 as being obvious over Ruckl in view of Beyer et al. or Klein. Ruckl discloses a supporting device for a cylindrical workpiece to be machined by radiation to form a printing element such as a flexographic printing element. The supporting device has a C-shaped ring forming a channel about the workpiece and having two closed ends (see figures 9 and 10). The ends are spaced from one another. Near one end is a carriage, not a hood, bearing supporting discs 27 so that the region of interaction between the workpiece and radiation is not covered. The ring has a suction line to create negative pressure.

Both Beyer and Klein disclose a hood covering a region of interaction between radiation and a workpiece and having a vacuum extraction channel for the interior air of the hood. The Examiner alleges that one of ordinary skill in the art would replace the supporting discs 27 of Ruckl with a hood as disclosed by Beyer or Klein.

Claim 1 recites a hood, which covers a region of interaction between the radiation and the workpiece surface and a C-shaped cover ring with two ends that follow the circumference of the

workpiece and are located at a distance from each other, the hood being arranged adjacent one of the two circumferential ends of the cover ring.

Ruckl discloses a laser 4 that is almost diametrically opposed to the space between the ends of the C-shaped ring. The hoods of Beyer and Klein have vacuum extraction channels immediately adjacent the area being worked upon to quickly and efficiently remove the by-products of the work. To use such a hood with the device of Ruckl would be adjacent the laser 4 and not adjacent one of the two circumferential ends of the cover ring, as is claimed.

The combination proposed by the Examiner does not result in a hood adjacent one circumferential end of the C-shaped ring and extraction means adjacent the other circumferential end of the C-shaped ring, as is claim. New claim 25 further emphasizes this relationship between the parts to substantially surround the word piece, as can be seen in Figure 4.

Applicants respectfully submit that the combination of elements as set forth in independent claim 1 is not disclosed or made obvious by the prior art of record, including Ruckl, Beyer and Klein, for the reasons explained above. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection are respectfully requested.

With regard to dependent claims 2-7, 9, 12 and 20-23, Applicants submit that these claims depend, either directly or indirectly, from independent claim 1 which is allowable for the reasons set forth above, and therefore claims 2-7, 9, 12 and 20-23 are allowable. In addition, these claims recite further limitations which are not disclosed or made obvious by the applied prior art references. Reconsideration and allowance thereof are respectfully requested.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner states that claims 8 and 10-24 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Applicants thank the Examiner for the early indication of allowable subject matter in this application.

Applicant thanks the Examiner for the early indication of allowable subject matter in this application. Objected-to claims 8 and 10 have been rewritten into independent form, and should therefore be allowed. Also, claims 13-19 and 24 depend, either directly or indirectly, from independent claim 10, and are therefore allowable based on their dependence from claim 10 which is believed to be allowable.

Conclusion

All of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding rejections and that they be withdrawn. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action, and as such, the present application is in condition for allowance.

In view of the above amendment, Applicant believes the pending application is in condition for allowance.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Christopher J. McDonald, Registration No. at the telephone number of the undersigned below to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Director is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies to charge any fees required during the pendency of the above-identified application or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448.

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Respectfully submitted,

By


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